



**Testimony of Sarah Calder, MaineHealth
In Support of LD 1077, “An Act to Fund Consultation Services to Ensure
Affordable Health Care for Maine Residents”
Tuesday, April 4, 2023**

Senator Bailey, Representative Perry and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services, I am Sarah Calder, Senior Government Affairs Director at MaineHealth, and I am here to testify in Support of LD 1077, “An Act to Fund Consultation Services to Ensure Affordable Health Care for Maine Residents.”

MaineHealth is an integrated non-profit health care system that provides a full continuum of health care services to the residents of eleven counties in Maine and one in New Hampshire. As part of our mission of “Working Together So Maine’s Communities are the Healthiest in America,” MaineHealth’s members are committed to providing access to health care services for all patients regardless of their insurance status. We also provide free care to those at or below 200% of the federal poverty level, above and beyond the state requirement of 150%.

Although charity care provides a safety net, MaineHealth has developed innovative Access to Care solutions across our service area since 1997. Over the years, hundreds of thousands of Maine people have received high-quality care, improved their health status, received free and reduced-price medications, reduced unnecessary emergency department visits, and learned how to successfully navigate the complexities of the healthcare system through our nationally-recognized Access to Care programs. These accomplishments are the result of hundreds of primary care and specialty physicians who donate their time, participating hospitals that donate their services, and the development of key partnerships, all fueled by a common vision and sense of responsibility to ensure access to care for all.

The MaineHealth Coverage Team, a program of Access to Care, specializes in helping uninsured or under-insured patients enroll in programs such as MaineCare and the Health Insurance Marketplace. Consumers for Affordable Health Care (CAHC) is a critical partner in their work to ensure that individuals have access to affordable, high quality health coverage. In fact, the MaineCare A-Z Manual and ABC trainings CAHC provides our staff are invaluable. Additionally, they are a resource for the Coverage Team for more complicated situations.

I urge the Committee to vote Ought to Pass on LD 1077, “An Act to Fund Consultation Services to Ensure Affordable Health Care for Maine Residents.”

Thank you and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.